

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS
EASTERN DIVISION**

**UNITED STATES SECURITIES
AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION,**

Plaintiff,

v.

**EQUITYBUILD, INC.,
EQUITYBUILD FINANCE, LLC,
JEROME H. COHEN and
SHAUN D. COHEN**

Defendants,

Civil Action No. 18-CV-5587

Hon. Judge John Z. Lee

**MOTION TO WITHDRAW OF CELIZA P. BRAGANÇA
FROM REPRESENTATION OF DEFENDANTS JEROME COHEN AND SHAUN COHEN**

Celiza P. Bragança of Bragança Law LLC hereby seeks leave of the Court to withdraw as counsel to defendants Jerome H. Cohen and Shaun D. Cohen. In support of this request, Celiza Bragança states:

1) Celiza Bragança was retained as counsel for all defendants to represent them with respect to a motion for a temporary restraining order, asset freeze, and appointment of a receiver filed by the SEC on August 15, 2018.

2) On August 17, 2018, the Court granted the SEC's motions. Pursuant to the Court's orders, all of the assets of Jerome Cohen and Shaun Cohen have been and remain subject to an asset freeze. A Receiver was appointed and took control of the EquityBuild defendants. From that point on, Celiza Bragança ceased representing the EquityBuild defendants, but continued representing Jerome Cohen and Shaun Cohen.

3) On August 31, 2018, the Court granted the Cohens' request to release \$20,000 of retainer funds that had been deposited in the firm's client trust account and that were subject to the asset freeze. Those funds were released to pay for services rendered by Celiza Bragança and the Law Offices of Jeffrey Friedman for representation of the entity defendants and individual defendants in the August 17 hearing on the SEC's motions and for representation of the individual defendants in the days following the entry of the Court's August 17 orders. (Dkt. 51)

4) Other than the payment authorized by the Court (Dkt. 51), Celiza Bragança has not been paid for representing the Cohens. The Cohens filed a motion for attorney's fees and living expenses on October 22, which the Court denied on October 24. (Dkt. 99) As a result, Celiza Bragança has not been paid for tens of thousands of dollars in fees and expenses incurred since August 20, 2019.

5) The Court granted the motion of Mark Rosenberg, who served as counsel to the individual defendants, to withdraw as counsel on October 17, 2018. (Dkt. 89)

6) Celiza Bragança has discussed this issue with the Cohens multiple times since the Court's October 24 order. She provided a draft of this motion to the Cohens before filing. The Cohens stated that because withdrawal would require them to proceed on a *pro se* basis, they object.

7) Despite the fact that the Cohens would be required to proceed *pro se*, the Court should grant Celiza Bragança's request to withdraw. There is no right to counsel in this civil proceeding. The burden of providing free legal advice to the Cohens in this complex case is significant. There are many parties, many filings, and the potential of depositions and other demands of the Receiver. The Court denied the Cohens' October 22 request for the release of funds from the asset freeze to pay both the Cohens' living expenses and attorney's fees. Although the

Cohens lack funds to pay for legal representation, it is unreasonable to require Celiza Bragança to continue to represent them for free.

WHEREFORE, Celiza Bragança hereby requests that the Court grant this motion to withdraw as counsel to Jerome Cohen and Shaun Cohen.

December 19, 2018

Respectfully submitted,



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